

elections simply does not exist. Belarusian strongman Alyaksandr Lukashenka—who illegally extended his own term in office—is once again attempting to dupe the international community into believing that there are viable electoral processes in today's Belarus. The reality is different.

The Lukashenka regime has not met any of the four conditions that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe set back last spring—namely, a democratic election law, an end to human rights abuses, access by the opposition to the state media, and genuine powers granted to the parliament. As a result, on August 30, the OSCE and other institutions decided not to send a full-fledged international observation team to Belarus. This decision could have been revisited if the situation in Belarus had improved. However, since August 30, the Lukashenka regime has denied registration to many opposition candidates on highly questionable grounds; detained, fined, or beaten over 100 individuals advocating a boycott of the elections; burglarized the headquarters of an opposition party; and confiscated 100,000 copies of an independent newspaper. My friend, opposition leader Anatoly Lebedka was physically assaulted during a commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the disappearance of opposition leader Viktor Gonchar and his associate Anatoly Krasovsky. I might add that another leader of the opposition, former Interior Minister Yuri Zakharenka, remains missing after having disappeared 17 months ago, and two leading opposition members, Andrei Klimov and Vladimir Koudinov, remain imprisoned on politically motivated charges.

Mr. Speaker, governmental interference in the election process appears to be rampant. There are reports that regional and local government executive committees have been threatened to ensure that government supported candidates will be elected. The registration process also showed strong signs of arbitrariness, with the rejection of a large percentage of candidates, especially opposition candidates. According to today's Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty East-Central Europe Report, Belarusian authorities—in an attempt to counter the opposition's call for an election boycott—have begun urging early voting and even threatening reprisals if voters fail to go to the polls. Furthermore, in Brest, the government-controlled local press is publishing election materials devoted solely to one candidate. All of these and other incidents, Mr. Speaker, have contributed to an atmosphere highly obtrusive to free and fair elections.

Given the pre-election atmosphere, the international community will be hard-pressed to recognize the new parliament, which succeeds the old, Lukashenka hand-picked parliament that was not recognized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and much of the international community. Moreover, the current election environment does not in any way inspire confidence that the presidential elections scheduled for next year will be democratic. Mr. Lukashenka would do well to keep in mind that, with the fall of Slobodan Milosevic, he becomes increasingly isolated as Europe's sole remaining dictator.

HONORING MR. JOHN HERNANDEZ

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to John Hernandez, one of Fort Worth, Texas' finest sons, in honor of his receiving the Ohtli Award from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his lifetime service to the Hispanic community. There is no person more deserving than John Hernandez.

The Ohtli Award recognizes individuals of Mexican descent who live outside of Mexico who have dedicated the better part of their lives to "opening up new paths" to make it easier for future generations to follow in their footsteps. Mr. Hernandez has done this and much more for the Hispanic community of Fort Worth.

Born in Fort Worth in 1931, Mr. Hernandez graduated from Laner Catholic High School in 1951. Six years later, in 1957, he married his wonderful wife, Jeanette. Together, they have dedicated their lives to faith, family, and community.

Mr. Hernandez has tirelessly served Fort Worth's Hispanic community. He is a Board member of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and served as its Chair from 1991–1992. Mr. Hernandez currently serves as the Chair of the North Texas Unity Council of La Raza and as a Board member and Second Vice Chair of the Red Cross. He is a member of the University of North Texas School of Community Service's Board. Mr. Hernandez also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and a Council Member at All Saints Catholic Church. As a Scout Master and Executive Board member of the Longhorn Council, he has been actively involved with the Boy Scouts of America for almost two decades. These are just several examples of his invaluable contributions to our community.

Paving the way for others to follow, Mr. Hernandez has helped tear down the walls of discrimination. He has always been a crusader for the betterment of the Hispanic community, never seeking the glory for himself, but instead for those around him. Our community is stronger for his presence and forever blessed for his dedication and devotion.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Hernandez, his wife of 42 years, Jeanette, his eight children, and fifteen grandchildren and wish them all continued happiness and success in their endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hernandez embodies the spirit of community responsibility we all strive towards. His life's work makes America a better place to live in every day.

CONGRATULATING JUDGE ROMAN S. GRIBBS UPON RETIREMENT

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the end of an era in the government of my home state of Michigan. With the retirement of Judge Roman S. Gribbs, the people

of Michigan are losing more than just a Judge, they are losing a man who has dedicated his life to serving the people. His dedication and work over the years for the people of Michigan has been truly admirable and aspiring to many.

With over 45 years of service to his community, Judge Gribbs has left his mark on a countless number of lives. This loving husband and father of five children, began his career as professor at the University of Detroit in 1954. His distinguished career included many different positions within the legal profession. His jobs ranged from Assistant Prosecutor to Sheriff of Wayne County by 1969. He was elected Mayor of the city of Detroit serving from 1970–1974, during which he was elected as the President of the National League of Cities.

In the 25 years since he left the Mayor's office, Judge Gribbs has dutifully served the citizens of Michigan, first on the Third Judicial Court and then on the Court of Appeals. His service throughout his life is a testament to the man that he is, a compassionate, committed worker for the people. Such a public servant is one that the people should treasure and feel fortunate to have in our democracy.

The state of Michigan and our country have been beneficiaries of the generous and outstanding service provided by Judge Roman S. Gribbs. It is my great pleasure to honor him today, and to wish him a happy, healthy and productive retirement.

HONORING BILL TRAMPE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this moment to recognize Bill Trampe on his recent award. Bill is one of two recipients of the Cranmer Award, presented by Colorado Open Lands. He was selected by the Board of Directors for his work with an organization he helped to co-found, which works to preserve family owned ranchlands throughout the Gunnison Basin.

Bill co-founded the Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy in order to help maintain a tradition that has long inhabited Colorado. This organization is made up of ranchers and community leaders aiming to protect and preserve over 20,000 acres of ranchland that is family-owned in southern Colorado. Bill is a third generation rancher and this organization holds a place dear to his heart.

Bill's dedication to preserving land for ranchers is quite evident in his past work with a number of different organizations. Bill is an advisor to the Colorado State University Mountain Meadows Research Station, a member of the Board of Directors of the Colorado River District and has served as member and President of the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison Water Conservancy District for nearly two decades. While his civic duties were great in number, he also found time to manage his family ranch, Trampe Ranches.

Bill has worked very hard to assist the ranchers and farmers of southern Colorado and ensure that their ranchland will be protected. Bill's dedication and hard work for his community has earned him the admiration of

this body. On behalf of the State of Colorado and the US Congress I congratulate Bill on this prestigious and well-deserved award. Congratulations!

HONORING MIKE QUERING FROM
THE SIXTH DISTRICT OF COLO-
RADO

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a constituent of mine from the Sixth Congressional District of Colorado, Mike Quering, and join others throughout the state of Colorado in recognizing the efforts of the Eighth Air Force and proclaim every October 8–14 as Mighty Eighth Air Force Week.

Mike is a member of the Eighth Air Force, which was formed and dispatched to England in 1942 to become the largest military unit in World War II, and the largest bomber force of all time. Over 350,000 airmen served in Europe and the Eighth Air Force has continued as an operational combat unit to this day with over one million serving our country in war and in peace.

In the one week period between October 8–14, 1943, the Eighth Air Force lost over 100 Heavy Bombers to enemy action over the skies of Europe, and despite heavy losses, many feel that this was the turning point for daylight strategic bombing. Targets during the week were as follows: on October 8th, over Bremen, Germany, the force lost 14 bombers and 3 fighters; on October 9th, over Anklam, Germany, they lost 6 bombers; on October 10th, over Munster, Germany, the Eighth Air Force lost 30 bombers and 1 fighter; and on October 14th, over Schweinfurt, Germany, the force lost 60 bombers and 1 fighter.

I think it is important, at this time, to point out that no Mighty Eighth mission was ever turned back due to enemy action—at a cost of 26,000 killed in action and over 28,000 taken as prisoners of war. The number of missing in action and wounded have even today not been counted.

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, the largest single military unit veterans group in history, holds its annual reunions in the month of October and today 20,000 Eighth Air Force Historical Society members are seeking to inform future generations of the contribution and sacrifice made by their generation to perpetuate America's freedom and way of life.

The Mighty Eighth stands as proof to America and the rest of the world of the sacrifices that our World War II veterans made to ensure that freedom and democracy survive and flourish around the world.

And so, as many proud veterans do every year during the week of October 8–14, I rise to proclaim this week of October 8–14 as Mighty Eighth Air Force Week. I would also ask every Eighth Air Force veteran and friend of the Eighth to wear and display items identifying them with The Mighty Eighth to honor and remember their comrades and especially those who made the supreme sacrifice.

HONORING NATIONAL DAY FOR
THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON
TAIWAN

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday, October 10th, marked the National Day in the Republic of China on Taiwan. The so-called "Double 10"—the tenth day of the tenth month—commemorates the founding of the Republic of China on October 10, 1911.

This "Double 10" observance in Taiwan this year is cause for both celebration and sobriety. The reason for celebration is obvious. As every Member knows, Taiwan once again conducted a national election, this past March. Chen Shui-bian, the former mayor of Taipei and a veteran of the pro-democracy campaign in the 1980's, was elected president.

As the reins of government were transferred from one party to another, the final phase of Taiwan's democratic transformation was completed. And a remarkable transformation it has been over the past decade—a renegotiation of the "social contract" that was conducted without the kinds of chaos and confrontation that have attended such sweeping political changes in some other countries.

There are many heroes in the democratization of Taiwan. President Chen, for one; and, his predecessor in the presidential office, Lee Teng-hui, for another. The 22 million people of Taiwan, who have taken so readily to democracy and have participated so enthusiastically in the whole electoral process, are also heroes.

So on the occasion of this year's "Double 10," all of Taiwan and its many American friends can join in a celebration of democracy and in a renewed commitment to the principles of a free society and a free market economy that have proved so successful in Taiwan, the United States, and many other countries.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is also a time for sobriety. The past seven-and-a-half years have witnessed a fundamental shift in U.S. policy toward Asia. Without the benefit of a thorough strategic analysis or an informed national debate, there has been a concerted attempt to redirect U.S. policy into a China-centric focus at the expense of our other traditional allies.

The perception in international circles that Taiwan has been stigmatized as the "problem" in U.S./China relations was most dramatically reinforced during President Clinton's trip in July 1998 to the People's Republic of China, during which he implicitly endorsed the P.R.C.'s interpretation of the "One China" doctrine.

Concurrent with the ill wind from Washington has been the rapid and provocative buildup of forces in the P.R.C.'s People's Liberation Army. A member of Representative ROHRBACHER's staff, Al Santoli, traveled to the region during August and filed a report that was published by the American Foreign Policy Council. Among Mr. Santoli's key findings:

The PLA's modernization and joint war fighting capabilities are developing at a rate far more rapidly than the Pentagon's previous predictions. The Nanjing Region exercises have showcased the PLA's new high-

tech capabilities, based on U.S. military tactics with information technology and weapons systems purchased or stolen from the U.S., Russia, and Israel.

During ongoing large-scale military exercises, China has demonstrated significant new joint-service war fighting skills "under high-tech conditions" that are steadily altering the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait . . . The PLA's doctrine of "asymmetrical" warfare emphasizes paralyzing the high-tech strength of the U.S. and our allies, through attacks on military, economic, and governmental computerized information systems.

Mr. Speaker, there is much more that could be said. I will leave it simply at this: No one can predict with certainty when the hour of maximum danger will come, but it is entirely possible—if present trends are permitted to continue much longer—that the candidate we elect as President next month will be the man who will eventually be confronted with a choice between defending Taiwan and its democracy or appeasing Beijing and thereby sacrificing U.S. strategic interests in Asia for generations to come.

So during this year's observance of "Double 10," let us celebrate what has been achieved in Taiwan—the victory of democracy and the blessings of a free society. Let us also be resolved to do whatever is necessary to protect Taiwan and to preserve its way of life. In standing by Taiwan, we are also standing up for ourselves.

HONORING DR. MURRAY PRITCH-
ARD OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 12, 2000

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, today I congratulate a very special man, Dr. Murray Pritchard of West Plains, Missouri. Dr. Pritchard was recently named Outstanding VA Health Care Provider of the Year at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada. I am very pleased to honor the distinguished career of Dr. Pritchard and all the contributions he has made to veterans in Southeast Missouri.

Dr. Pritchard served this country in the Army during World War II. He was captured in North Africa in February 1943, and spent two years in a prisoner of war camp in Germany. When Dr. Pritchard returned from the war, he went to medical school and became a doctor of osteopathy while also completing a masters degree in public health administration. After several years in private practice, our community was lucky to have him join the staff of the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center in Poplar Bluff in 1973. Dr. Pritchard worked in the outpatient department until he retired in 1985.

But retirement didn't last very long. Soon Dr. Pritchard helped lead the innovative process of starting the VA Mobile Clinic program. Many veterans in rural America live 100 miles or more from the closest VA medical center. Traveling to see a doctor, to get a check up, or even to get necessary prescription drugs is a hardship to these men and women. But Dr. Pritchard and the folks at the Poplar Bluff VA wouldn't let distance stop them from giving top-notch care to veterans. If the vets couldn't